



KING DIONYSIUS AND SQUIRE DAMOCLES;

A New Song on an Old Story.

Proper to be sung at all Feasts and Merry-makings.

THERE was a heathen man, sir,
Belonging to a King;
And still it was his plan, sir,
To covet every thing.

And if you don't believe me,
I'll name him if you please,
For let me not deceive ye,
'Twas one Squire Damocles.

He thought that jolly living
Must every joy afford,
And knew of no misgiving,
While round the festive board.

He wanted to be great, sir,
And fed on fare delicious,
And have his feasts in state, sir,
Just like King Dionysius.

The King, to cure his longing,
Prepar'd a feast so fine,
That all the Court were thronging
To see the Courtier dine.

And there to tempt his eye, sir,
Was fish, and flesh, and fowl,
And when he was a-dry, sir,
He had a brimming bowl.

Nor did the King forbid him
From drinking all he could;
The Monarch never chid him,
But fill'd him with his food.

O then, to see the pleasure
Squire Damocles express!
'Twas joy beyond all measure;
Was ever man so blest?

With greedy eyes the Squire
Devour'd each costly dainty;
You'd think he did as if
To eat as much as twenty.

But just as he prepar'd, sir,
Of bliss to take his swing;
O, how the man was fear'd, sir!
By this so cruel King!

When he to eat intended,
Lo! just above his head,
He spied a sword suspended
All by a single thread.

How did it change the feasting
To wormwood and to gall,
To think, while he was tasting,
The pointed sword might fall.

Then in a moment's time, sir,
He loath'd the luscious feast;
And dreaded, as a crime, sir,
The brimming bowl to taste.

Now, if you're for applying
The story I have told,
I think there's no denying
'Tis worth its weight in gold.

Ye'gay, who view this stranger,
And pity his sad case;
And think there was great danger
In Damocles's case;

Come let this awful truth
In all your minds be stor'd;
That DEATH o'er every youth
Hangs like a pointed sword.

And tho' you see no reason,
To check your mirth at all;
In some sad drunken season
The sword on you may fall.

So learn, while at your ease
You drink down draughts delicious,
To think of Damocles,
And old King Dionysius.